

In the Claims

The claims have been amended as follows:

- 1 1. (currently amended) An illuminated exit device comprising:
2 a door latch mechanism;
3 a base for attachment to a surface of a door;
4 an actuator movably mounted relative to the base and connected to operate
5 the door latch mechanism when pressure is applied to the actuator by a
6 person desiring to operate the exit device;
7 a planar electroluminescent illuminator mounted to the exit device and
8 electrically insulated therefrom;
9 an inverter providing high voltage AC power to the electroluminescent
10 illuminator from a low voltage input to the inverter connected via
11 including electrical wiring extending through the exit device for
12 connection to a source of low voltage electrical power, the low voltage
13 being sufficiently low and the electrically insulated mounting of the
14 electroluminescent illuminator being sufficient for the high voltage AC
15 power to not present a shock hazard to the person desiring to operate the
16 exit device, the electroluminescent illuminator comprising a planar source
17 of illumination providing illumination from each point in a planar area
18 corresponding to the electroluminescent illuminator and the
19 electroluminescent illuminator producing the illumination by
20 electroluminescence of an electrically excited electroluminescent material

21 | ~~extending over the planar area corresponding to the electroluminescent~~
22 | ~~illuminator;~~
23 | a planar sign including opaque portions for blocking illumination from the
24 | electroluminescent illuminator, the sign being mounted in front of the
25 | electroluminescent illuminator; and
26 | a transparent protective cover mounted in front of the sign, the illuminator,
27 | sign and covering plate forming a sign assembly visibly mounted on the
28 | exit device.

1 2. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1 wherein the
2 actuator comprises an elongated push bar.

1 3. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1 wherein the
2 sign assembly is mounted on the actuator and pressure applied to the sign
3 assembly will operate the exit device.

1 4. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1 further
2 including a touchpad mounted on the actuator, and wherein the sign assembly is
3 mounted on the touchpad.

1 5. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 4 wherein the
2 touchpad includes a surface cavity in a surface thereof and the sign assembly is
3 mounted in the surface cavity with the transparent protective cover positioned
4 flush with the surface of the touchpad.

1 6. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 4 wherein the
2 touchpad is formed of an electrically insulating material providing an electrically
3 insulating barrier between the electroluminescent illuminator and other parts of
4 the exit device.

1 7. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 6 wherein the
2 touchpad is formed of plastic.

1 8. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 6 wherein the
2 electroluminescent illuminator is encased in a transparent plastic comprising an
3 additional electrical insulator to provide double electrical insulation between the
4 electroluminescent illuminator and other parts of the exit device.

1 9. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1 wherein the
2 planar sign comprises an opaque film adhesively attached to the transparent
3 protective cover.

1 10. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 9 wherein the
2 planar sign comprises an opaque paint.

1 11. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1 wherein the
2 sign includes letters forming the word "EXIT" and/or other verbage in English or
3 other language thereon.

1 12. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1 wherein the
2 electroluminescent illuminator is encased in a transparent plastic comprising an
3 electrical insulator.

1 13. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1 further
2 including a touchpad mounted on the actuator, and wherein:

3 the touchpad includes a surface cavity in a surface thereof and the surface
4 cavity includes a plurality of openings;

5 the transparent cover includes a plurality of tabs; and

6 the sign assembly is held in the surface cavity by engagement between the
7 tabs of the cover and the openings in the surface cavity.

1 14. (canceled)

1 15. (canceled)

1 16. (currently amended) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1
2 ~~claim 14~~ wherein the inverter provides high voltage AC power to the
3 electroluminescent illuminator from a low voltage which is suitable for driving
4 electromechanical locks and hardware.

1 17. (currently amended) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1
2 ~~claim 14~~ wherein the inverter provides high voltage AC power to the

3 electroluminescent illuminator from a 24 volts AC or DC power input to the
4 inverter.

1 18. (currently amended) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1
2 ~~claim 14~~ wherein the inverter is mounted in the base.

1 19. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1 wherein:
2 the base includes an opening facing towards the surface of the door on which
3 the base is to be attached, and
4 the electrical wiring is hidden from view within the exit device and extends
5 from the electroluminescent illuminator to the opening in the base
6 whereby the electroluminescent illuminator may be electrically
7 connected to hidden power wiring in the door extending from an
8 electrical hinge to an opening in the door surface, the opening in the base
9 being located opposite the opening in the door surface to permit
10 connection between the power wiring and the internal wiring.

1 20. (original) The illuminated exit device according to claim 1 wherein the
2 transparent cover is removable without removal of the exit device from the door
3 to permit replacement or repair of the electroluminescent illuminator.

1 21. (new) An illuminated exit device comprising:
2 a door latch mechanism;
3 a base for attachment to a surface of a door;

4 an actuator movably mounted relative to the base and connected to operate
5 the latch mechanism when pressure is applied to the actuator;
6 a planar electroluminescent illuminator including electrical wiring extending
7 through the exit device for connection to a source of electrical power;
8 a planar sign including opaque portions for blocking illumination from the
9 electroluminescent illuminator, the sign being mounted in front of the
10 electroluminescent illuminator;
11 a transparent protective cover mounted in front of the sign, the illuminator,
12 sign and covering plate forming a sign assembly visibly mounted on the
13 exit device; and
14 a touchpad mounted on the actuator, the touchpad including a surface cavity
15 in a surface thereof and the surface cavity including a plurality of
16 openings, and wherein the touchpad includes a surface cavity in a surface
17 thereof and the surface cavity includes a plurality of openings, the
18 transparent cover includes a plurality of tabs, and the sign assembly is
19 held in the surface cavity by engagement between the tabs of the cover
20 and the openings in the surface cavity.